



Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554
AUG 4 1998

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AUG 14 1998

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Mr. Chuck Maxey
8011 Theisswood
Spring, TX 77379

Dear Mr. Maxey:

Thank you for your electronic mail message to President Clinton regarding a "telephone tax" or fee that has been added to some consumers' telephone bills by carriers to recover their contributions to the universal service support mechanisms. The White House has asked me to respond to your inquiry.

On May 7, 1997, the Commission, as required by the Telecommunications Act of 1996 (1996 Act), adopted a first Report and Order to implement the Federal-State Joint Board's recommendations on universal service. The Commission established universal service support mechanisms that fulfill Congress's goal, as stated in Section 254 of the 1996 Act, of ensuring that affordable, quality telecommunications services are available to all American consumers, including those located in high cost, rural, and insular areas and low income consumers. In addition, these mechanisms implement Congress's mandate to ensure the nation's classrooms' and libraries' access to the vast array of educational resources that are accessible through the telecommunications network. These support systems also will link health care providers located in rural areas to urban medical centers so that patients living in rural America will have access, through the telecommunications network, to the same advanced diagnostic and other medical services that are available in urban communities.

In the 1996 Act, Congress stated that all telecommunications carriers that provide interstate telecommunications services must contribute on an equitable and nondiscriminatory basis to universal service. The Commission implemented this statutory provision by requiring all telecommunications carriers to contribute to the universal service support mechanisms. Neither Congress, nor the Commission, require carriers to pass this contribution on to their customers. To the contrary, carriers decide how and to what extent they recover their contributions. Carriers, however, may not mislead customers as to how they recover contributions and may only recover an equitable share from any particular customer.

The Commission is monitoring the universal service support mechanisms and their impact on telephone ratepayers. This issue will be carefully reviewed as the support mechanisms are administered.

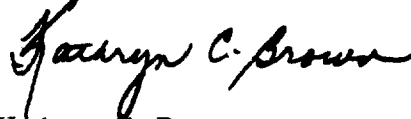
Enclosed
Sincerely,
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Mr. Chuck Maxey

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Your e-mail has been placed in the official public record of the universal service proceeding (CC Docket No. 96-45). I appreciate your interest in these important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kathryn C. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'K' and a long, sweeping underline.

Kathryn C. Brown
Chief
Common Carrier Bureau

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From chuck@selec.net Sat Jun 6 01:54:21 1998
Date: Sat, 06 Jun 1998 00:51:34 -0500
From: chuck@selec.net (Chuck Maxey)
Subject: The ERate Program
To: president@WhiteHouse.GOV
Cc: chuck@selec.net
Reply-to: <@selec.net>
Message-id: <19980606055924337.AAA342@MAX.selec.net>

Content-transfer-encoding: 7BIT
X-MSMail-Priority: Normal
Comments: This message scanned by SCAN version 0.1 jms/960226
X-Priority: 3

Mr. President I heard you comments about the ERate program on C-Span from your speech at MIT. Your goal may be well intended, but your method is wrong. Over 80% of America's school are already hooked up to the internet without any additional federal funding. Using the FCC to impose a tax on the American people without congressional debate and approval is taxation without representation. We fought a war to prevent this type of activity from a dictatorial government. My schools local fees, assessments and property taxes are high enough already. I urge you to stop this illegal, unconstitutional tax without a court fight. Our federal government is running surpluses why are you pushing for even more taxes!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!??????????

Thank You,
Chuck Maxey
8011 Theisswood
Spring, TX 77379 or EMail chuck@selec.net